



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Addressing the Propane Shortage: Governor Scott Walker Signs Emergency Heating Assistance Legislation

Governor Walker Takes Action on an Additional 30 Bills, Signing a Total of 29 Bills into Law and Issuing One Partial Veto and One Full Veto

Madison – Today, Governor Scott Walker signed legislation to assist people struggling to pay high heating bills as a result of the propane shortage and bitter cold winter. Under Assembly Bill 770, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) will administer the emergency heating assistance loan guarantee program. To be approved for emergency heating assistance, applicants must have a household income no higher than 200 percent of the median income of their county, they cannot be eligible for conventional financing, and they must demonstrate reasonable ability to repay the loan.

“The propane shortage affected residents and business owners all around the state, and left many with unexpectedly high heating bills that they cannot pay in full,” said Governor Walker. “This emergency heating assistance loan guarantee program will help families make ends meet and offers some relief from the burden created by the propane crisis.”

Assembly Bill 770 – creates an emergency heating assistance loan guarantee program. It will allow families to obtain financing of up to \$2,500 through a participating lender with a guarantee of 50 to 80 percent on original amount borrowed. Assembly Bill 770 makes financing more affordable by providing a one-time payment of 3.5 percent to reduce the interest rate on the loan. The bill passed the Assembly 94-1 and unanimously passed the Senate; it is Act 175.

In addition, Governor Scott Walker signed the following bills into law, including one partial veto, and issued one full veto.

Senate Bill 20 – expands the residency requirement for election observers to allow individuals from the county to serve, as opposed to only the municipality or ward. The bill passed the Senate 17-16 and the Assembly 56-38; it is Act 147.

Senate Bill 377 – requires that the Election Day registration audit of voter addresses, which is already conducted under current law, be submitted to the GAB, published on GAB’s website, and included in their annual report to the Legislature. The bill passed both the Senate and the Assembly on a voice vote; it is Act 148.

Senate Bill 548 – charges the GAB with notifying electors who have not voted in the last four years that they must re-register. GAB has already begun this process for municipalities, so tasking them solely with this duty will reduce duplicate mailings and result in savings for municipalities. The bill passed the Senate on a voice vote and the Assembly 62-31; it is Act 149.

Senate Bill 640 – makes the Legislative Reference Bureau’s suggested changes to the form for certain residential or construction contracts. The bill passed the Senate and the Assembly on a voice vote; it is Act 150.

Senate Bill 641 – corrects provisions of statute by supplying omissions and eliminating defects. The bill passed the Senate and the Assembly on a voice vote; it is Act 151.

Senate Bill 643 – clarifies language relating to county aid for town bridges and culverts to state that the petition should include a description of the location and size of the project. The bill passed the Senate and the Assembly on a voice vote; it is Act 152.

Senate Bill 655 – modernizes campaign finance laws by allowing electronic filing of finance reports, as opposed to the need for hard copies, updates contribution limits which have not been adjusted since 1973, and clarifies that news stories do not count as contributions or disbursements. The bill passed the Senate 17-16 and the Assembly 54-37; it is Act 153.

Assembly Bill 19 – requires plaintiffs to disclose claims they have filed or anticipate filing against asbestos trusts to prevent double dipping. This legislation does not prevent victims from filing claims and will ensure the solvency of the asbestos trust. The bill passed the Assembly 55-38 and the Senate 17-16; it is Act 154.

Assembly Bill 89 – relates to the method of reporting election returns. Creates efficiencies and cost savings by allowing municipalities with a population of more than 35,000 to combine election returns for any ward with 20 or fewer returns for any adjacent ward, subject to limitations. The bill passed the Assembly and the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 155.

Assembly Bill 161 – relates to injunctions of state statute. Currently, if an injunction is issued, appeals are discretionary. This bill states that injunctions can be immediately appealed as a matter of right. The bill passed the Assembly 60-36 and the Senate 18-14; it is Act 156.

Assembly Bill 288 – relating to municipal and consolidated library funding. Eliminates inequality in library service by allowing counties to bill adjacent counties for services provided regardless of whether that county has a consolidated public library. The bill passed the Assembly and the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 157.

Assembly Bill 360 – clarifies rules regarding emergency detention or involuntary commitment, including changes to the standards of dangerousness the law enforcement official take into account when considering a commitment and repeals the rule that an involuntary commitment of an inmate ends on the date of their release on parole or extended supervision. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 158.

Assembly Bill 396 – requires that special voting deputies be present at adult family homes, community-based residential facilities, and residential care apartment complexes when there is absentee voting. The bill passed the Assembly 56-38 and the Senate 17-16; it is Act 159.

Assembly Bill 420 – requires that nomination paper, recall, and referendum petitions include the legibly printed name as well as the signature of the signer, along with the address and date of signing. The bill passed the Assembly 53-38 and the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 160.

Assembly Bill 435 – clarifies the admission process and review of petitions on behalf of minors aged 14 or older who are voluntarily participating in inpatient treatment for mental illness, developmental disability, alcoholism, or drug abuse. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 161.

Assembly Bill 558 – adds clarifying language relating to carrying a firearm in public buildings. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 162.

Assembly Bill 559 – removes out-of-date statutory language relating to the Department of Transportation including the requirement that the Department submit documentation about the security interest in a vehicle to the register of deeds. Also replaces a special group license plate for female veterans with special group license plates for female veterans in each of the five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. The bill passed the Assembly and was concurred by the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 163.

Assembly Bill 560 – requires a 12-person jury in all criminal cases and removes the requirement that the clerk of court keep the names of notaries public in the register of officials. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 164.

Assembly Bill 561 – corrects errors in existing statute. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 165.

Assembly Bill 562 – corrects errors in existing statute. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 166.

Assembly Bill 563 – corrects errors in existing statute relating to the statute of limitations for repeated sexual assault of a child and the suspension of licenses for those with felonies or misdemeanors who carry concealed weapons. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 167.

Assembly Bill 564 – corrects errors in existing statute. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 168.

Assembly Bill 565 – repeals the schedule of elections that is stated within the subchapter II of Chapter 10, Wisconsin Statutes, as according to GAB, local clerks use the election calendar provided by the Board. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 169.

Assembly Bill 566 – suggested by the Department of Children and Families, this bill clarifies statutes related to children. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 170.

Assembly Bill 567 – clarifies statutes relating to public records access and removes out-of-date references. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 171.

Assembly Bill 568 – clarifies laws relating to the publication and effective date of administrative rules. The bill passed both the Assembly and the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 172.

Assembly Bill 569 – corrects errors in existing statute. The bill passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 173.

Assembly Bill 606 – changes the number of required signatures of electors to not less than 100 and not more than 200 for candidates for alderperson in smaller cities. The bill passed the Assembly and the Senate on a voice vote; it is Act 174.

Senate Bill 324 – Governor Walker signed Senate Bill 324 pertaining to early voting, with a partial veto of Sections 1 and 2. With the changes from the partial veto, early voting is not limited to 45 total hours per week for statewide elections, but maintains the requirement for more uniform voting hours across the state: Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., similar to uniform voting hours on the actual election day. Governor Walker also vetoed the provision requiring municipalities to provide compensation to individuals who assist with in-person absentee voting, and eliminated the appropriation as it would create a new state expenditure for a function historically handled by local governments. The bill passed the Senate 17-16 and the Assembly 56-38; it is Act 146.

Senate Bill 628 – Governor Walker issued a veto of Senate Bill 628 in its entirety. Due to the way raffles are conducted and regulated, the changes proposed in the bill threatened the exclusive rights of the Indian tribes to conduct Class III gaming.

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